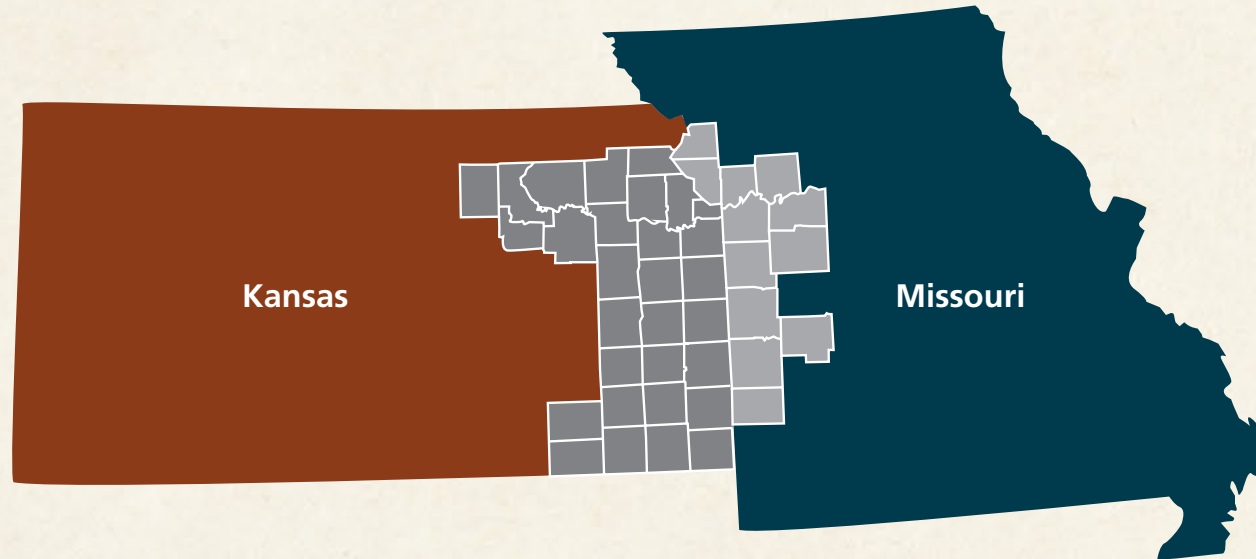


Freedom's Frontier

NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA



WHAT IS FREEDOM'S FRONTIER?



How Do You Tell the Story of Freedom?

If you live along the Missouri-Kansas border, how you tell the story of freedom often depends on where you call home.

Along this border, a new nation set out in a long trek across the ancestral lands of Native Americans to settle the frontier and, in the process, hoped to find economic and religious freedom.

Along this border, the nation violently disputed expanding definitions of freedom based on skin color and gender.

Along this border, millions of Americans fought—over school segregation, over Native-American rights, over suffrage, over the right to choose how to live and love—in the enduring struggle for freedom.

Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area brings together the stories that started here but grew to change the course of history for the entire country. Whether it is the story of the settlement of the frontier, the Border War and Civil War along this western frontier, or the enduring struggle for freedom,

Freedom's Frontier knits these stories together into one American fabric.

Its threads contain the remarkable stories from partners at more than 165 historical sites and museums. Our mission is furthered through 100 additional partner organizations, such as convention and visitor bureaus, educators, and support societies. Each is deeply invested in telling these stories.

More than three million people call Freedom's Frontier home. More than 30,000 square miles fall into the 41 counties that define Freedom's Frontier along both sides of this border. As we enter our thirteenth year of operation, even more counties, in both Missouri and Kansas, are making plans to join Freedom's Frontier.

How do we tell the story of freedom? Read on to find out.

THE VALUE OF HISTORY



Creating Lifelong Learners and Everyday Explorers

Freedom's Frontier engages with learners of all ages, from underserved elementary students to high schoolers investigating the roots of today's challenges, to curious adults who never stop learning. Our summer youth camps, bus grants, lectures, symposia, and partner programs like the KC Race Project encourage **critical thinking**, develop **engaged citizens**, and inspire **tomorrow's leaders**.

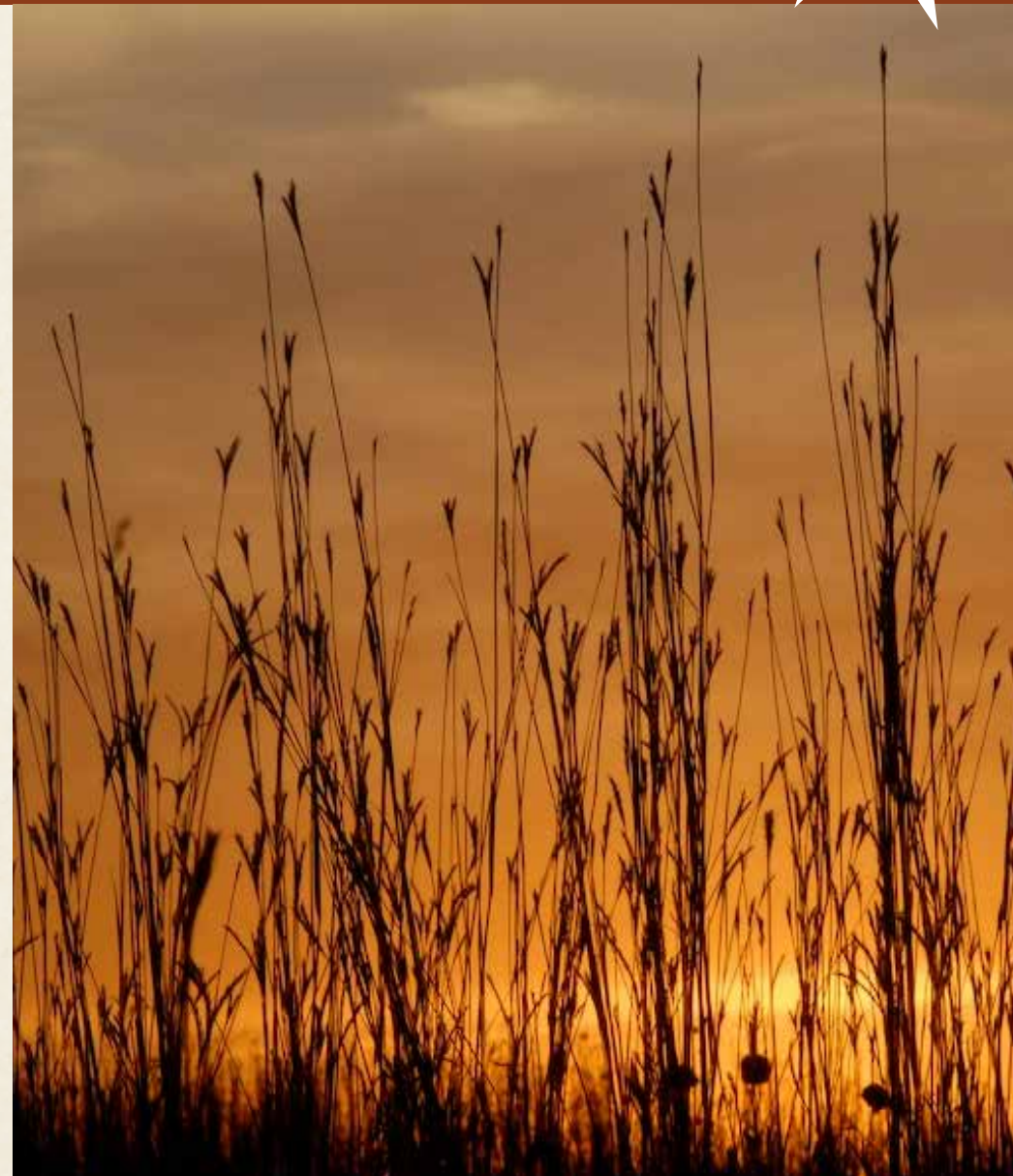
Investing in the Future of Our Past

Freedom's Frontier invests in historical assets and organizations across our 41 counties. We bring together public and private support to conserve, preserve, and restore significant landscapes, historic buildings, and sites. Our strong partner network raises the level of professionalism among heritage organizations in our communities. We believe this investment pays off by creating **vibrant communities** and stimulating **economic development** that result from heritage tourism.

Telling a Story of National Significance

Freedom's Frontier centers on a frontier that is like no other in American history. The porous border between the United States and Permanent Indian Territory, and later, between slave state and free state, lacked a geographic barrier. That led to cross-cultural exchange, frequent armed conflict, and an ongoing struggle for equal freedoms. We work to share this contentious history because it comprises not only our **identity**, from which others can learn, but also our **legacy** to preserve for future generations.

Learn more about the value and relevance of this work by accessing the Value of History Statement at historyrelevance.com.



Want to support Freedom's Frontier?
Head to freedomfrontier.org and click the donate button.

CREATING LIFELONG LEARNERS AND EVERYDAY EXPLORERS

Youth Camps

Our youth camps provide fourth- and fifth-grade students from local Boys and Girls Clubs an opportunity to explore the diverse histories of our partner sites.

In 2018, we worked with 157 Boys and Girls Club students from Independence and Kansas City, Missouri, and Lawrence, Kansas City, and Topeka, Kansas. Through our camps, students experienced museums, nature preserves, historic sites, and local waterways.



Bus on Us!

The *Bus on Us!* program gives students of all ages opportunities to take a field trip related to our three themes. We make it possible for schools to visit sites and experience quality programming.

Many of these schools would not be able to arrange trips for their students without the support received from Freedom's Frontier. This program also allows for our partner sites and these schools to develop a long-lasting connection.

In 2018:

- 1,910 students learned something new about their community.
- 210 adults experienced these stories with their children and class.
- 15 partner sites educated students who would not have been able to visit without *Bus on Us!*

Scouting

Not all learning happens in the classroom. In 2018, we engaged scouts in our communities with our first merit badge fair. At the fair, in one stop, scouts could earn a variety of badges by interacting with our museums and historic sites. In 2019, we will expand this fair to a new location.

Podcasting

Freedom's Frontier turned to podcasting to tell stories of our region. *More than a Yellow Brick Road* highlights family-friendly sites and activities in Freedom's Frontier. The kid-friendly podcast can be accessed through freedomfrontier.org.





Interpretive Grants

Freedom's Frontier provides grants to partners. Up to \$5,000 is available for qualifying projects to interpret stories connected to the heritage area's rich history. Since 2012, Freedom's Frontier awarded more than 125 grants—18 projects received funding in 2018. Some examples are:



Pony Express National Museum

The Pony Express Museum developed a photo kiosk highlighting the places riders stopped.

Cass County Historical Society

The Cass County Historical Society has upgraded an existing tour to help visitors experience the Burnt District.

Little House on the Prairie Museum

This grant aided the replacement of three existing interpretive signs that describe the history of the structures that embody the story of Laura Ingalls Wilder. In addition, The Little House on the Prairie Museum created a new brochure and 11 commemorative postcards.

The Curators of the University of Missouri

The Center for Midwestern Studies and the Gay and Lesbian Archive of Mid-America fabricated a traveling exhibit on the region's pivotal role in the rise of America's Gay Rights Movement. The exhibit focuses on the first ever national meeting of gay rights activists in Kansas City in 1966.

Fractured Atlas

Community artists developed *Weaving the River* as an immersive art experience that celebrates the unrecognized history of the Quindaro Townsite. This installation includes a multisensory interpretation of the Missouri River.

Arts and AGEing KC

Arts and AGEing KC hosted the "Museums and Intergenerational Sharing: The Challenges and the Joy of Working with Persons with Dementia and their Caregivers" workshop. This workshop assisted in the training of museum professionals and volunteer interpreters.

Clay County Historical Society (MO)

The Clay County Historical Society developed a documentary short film, an exhibit and a walking and driving tour of the county that focuses on the Battle of Liberty and how the Civil War affected the county.

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INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF OUR PAST

Professional Development Scholarships

Freedom's Frontier partners can qualify for scholarships for conferences and workshops to provide additional training to refine skills and network with other professionals. When they return, scholarship recipients display what they learned in our newsletter and at partner meetings.

AASLH

Freedom's Frontier welcomed the American Association for State and Local History, the professional association for history-doers. At 2018's national conference held in Kansas City, directors of history museums, volunteers at historical societies, genealogists, teachers, historians, archivists, or one of the many other important contributors to the history field, learned more about Freedom's Frontier as they perfected their craft.

As the meeting's premier sponsor, partners in Freedom's Frontier helped the 1,000 public history professionals and volunteers in attendance explore and learn more about the National Heritage Area through networking opportunities, session presentations, and conference tours.

As part of our commitment to offer professional development opportunities, Freedom's Frontier also provided fellowships for seven partners to attend the conference and report to other partners what they learned. These partners hailed from the Vernon County Historical Society (MO), Riley County Historical Museum (KS), Excelsior Springs Museums (MO), Tonganoxie Community Historical Society (KS), Wornall/Majors House Museums (MO), and St. Joseph Museums (MO).

Bringing Specialized Training Home

By gathering partners at sites throughout the heritage area, Freedom's Frontier provides a variety of training opportunities that are never far from home. Training sessions at bimonthly partner meetings have included developing shared exhibits that will travel to multiple sites, using podcasts to tell stories to a broader community, and developing tourism initiatives. By taking the training to partner sites, Freedom's Frontier ensures no partner is too distant to benefit from working together.





Women's History Workshop

"The Interpreting Women's History at Your Site" workshop, attended by 30 partners, provided guidelines and best practices for telling inclusive stories. Dr. Delia Gillis, professor of history and founding Director of the Center for Africana Studies at the University of Central Missouri, sparked new ideas and discussions on how to integrate women's stories into historic sites. Guest speaker Lori Osborne directs the Frances Willard House Museum and spoke about her experience researching and implementing women's stories into exhibits.



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TELLING A NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT STORY



Quindaro: A Model for Partnership

Quindaro is a Kansas City, Kansas, neighborhood rooted in stories of Native Americans and settlers, suffragists and abolitionists, the Kansas-Nebraska and Fugitive Slave acts, and the Underground Railroad and the efforts of enslaved people to find freedom.

Quindaro flourished as a community in the 1850s, leaving important legacies. Its school for African-American children became one of the first black universities. Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church continues to serve worshipers as one of the Midwest's oldest African-American congregations.

Freedom's Frontier worked to bring together a broad mix of those who keep and honor its stories. These story-keepers are working together to seek greater national recognition for Quindaro.

Freedom's Frontier has helped partners apply to the National Park Service to name Quindaro as a National Historic Landmark — one of only 2,500 in the country.

As part of that effort, and to demonstrate the broad community support for the importance of Quindaro, Freedom's Frontier hosted "Strength Through Numbers: The Intersection of Abolitionist Politics, Freed Blacks and a Flourishing Community in Quindaro," April 19-21, 2018.

History professors and community members presented papers on aspects of Quindaro history. The Kansas City, Kansas Public Library collected more than 40 oral histories of Quindaro memories. More than 150 people attended the symposium. Nearly 500 people attended Dr. Quintard Taylor's keynote address, which was later broadcast by C-SPAN.

Later in 2018, the United States House of Representatives passed legislation authored by Rep. Kevin Yoder to name Quindaro one of the first National Commemorative Sites.





Courtesy of Hugh Brown and the National Park Service, Harper's Ferry Center.



Tying These Stories Together

Building Regional Networks

Freedom's Frontier works throughout the heritage area to develop regional partner networks. In 2018, we helped Topeka historic sites develop a marketing plan and worked with Visit Topeka to implement that plan. We have also joined with a coalition of heritage sites in Johnson County, Kansas, which advocates for one another and collectively seeks funding.

Presenting Public Programs

Freedom's Frontier has partnered with many organizations to present public programs about our themes. We have collaborated with the Johnson County, Kansas, Library to bring author Tanner Colby to the area for a series of public events as part of Race Project KC. We joined with the Kansas City Public Library to present a series of symposia on the history of Freedom's Frontier.

Elevating Historic Landmarks

Efforts to elevate the status of the Quindaro Townsite prompted other partners in Freedom's Frontier to begin exploring national designation. The Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum in Atchison, Kansas, and the Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm in Olathe, Kansas, are also working with Freedom's Frontier to apply for National Historic Landmark status.

Preserving Historic Collections

Through our grants, partners improve their sites through preservation. Continued preservation and restoration of artifacts gives our partners the ability to tell their story for years to come. Examples include:

Lecompton Historical Society employed a University of Kansas Museum Studies student to update artifact records by inventorying, photographing, applying or reapplying identification numbers, collecting additional data on the artifacts, and entering it on collection control software.

Kansas City Kansas Public Library preserved a daguerreotype within the library's Quindaro exhibit that allows for further community interpretation through the library's website.

De Soto Historical Society purchased the De Soto newspapers from the Kansas Historical Society and transferred them to microfilm in order to make them accessible to the public and available for research and interpretation.

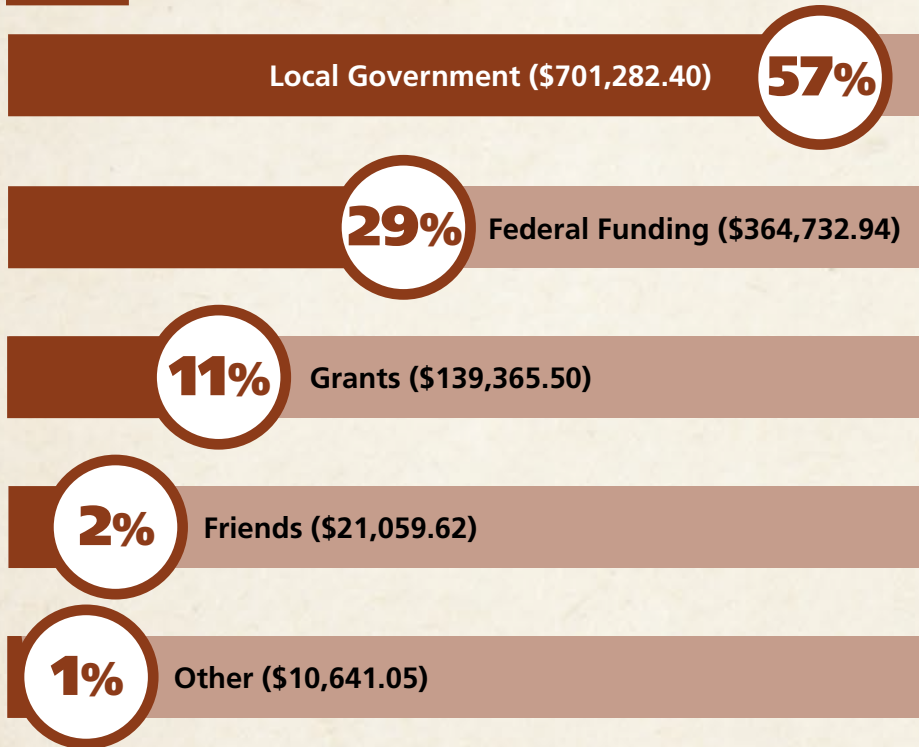
Shawnee Indian Mission Foundation preserved its full-sized covered wagon used for living history and school programming.

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FINANCIALS



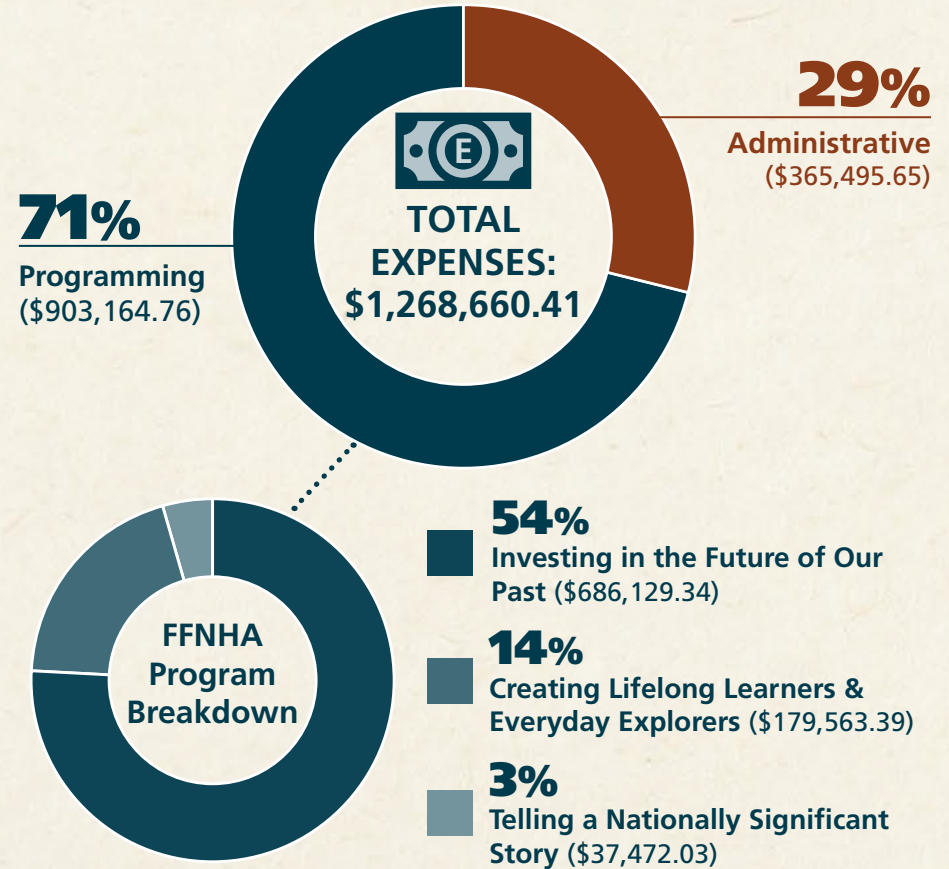
Income



TOTAL INCOME:
\$1,237,081.51



Expenses



GuideStar is the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations. Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area was awarded the GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency, achieved by less than one tenth of 1% of nonprofits.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



“Freedom’s Frontier is not just a nonprofit organization doing good works. It is an extraordinary collaboration of committed partners, energized volunteers, and dedicated staff—cooperating to share the distinct stories of our region. Working together, we spark residents’ pride in their sense of place, visitors’ astonishment at the drama of oft-untold stories, and partners’ capabilities to achieve these goals.

Our Trustees endeavor to ensure that Freedom’s Frontier is not only a memorable theme, but also a unifying proclamation of our unique heritage along our shared border.”

Duane Benton, *Chair, Board of Trustees*

2018 Board of Trustees:

Duane Benton, *Chair* - Kansas City, MO

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Nancy Thellman - Lawrence, KS

Bill Wagnon - Topeka, KS

Alexis Woodall - Olathe, KS

Want to support Freedom’s Frontier?
Head to freedomfrontier.org and click the donate button.

PARTNERSHIP



Our partners are a vital part of Freedom's Frontier and we work hard to build a professional community to benefit all of our partners. We connect institutions and organizations to work together on joint promotions, field trips, artifact loans, special tours, and research projects. Our Partner Advisory Committee works throughout the year to provide vital input to the staff and Board of Trustees.

Advisory Committee Members

Erica Layton
Atkins-Johnson Farm and Museum

Caitlin Eckard
Jackson County Historical Society

Marcia Rozell
Visit Manhattan

Larry Short
Santa Fe Trail Association

Alexis Woodall
Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop & Farm

Suzanne Dennis,
Museum of Deaf History, Arts
& Culture

Alana Smith
Westport Historical Society

Paul Bahnmaier
Lecompton Historical Society

Alinda Miller
Lone Jack Historical Society

Enimini Ekong
Brown v. Board of Education
National Historic Site

Steve Nowak
Watkins Museum of History

Karen Griffin
American Jazz Museum

Peggy Buhr
Bates County Historical Society

Cheryl Collins
Riley County Historical Society

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Scott Davis

Youth Camp Assistant

Katie McWhirter

Youth Camp Assistant

An Sasala

Hall Center for the

Humanities Fellow



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LOOKING FORWARD

Reauthorization

Federal support through the National Park Service attracts private investment and national interest in our stories. To continue this public-private investment partnership, Freedom's Frontier will join our partners to ask Congress to renew our authorization in 2019. We will ask our congressional delegation to support reauthorizing Freedom's Frontier as part of a larger effort to create a program of National Heritage Areas within the National Park Service.

How Do YOU Tell the Story of Freedom?

If you support freedom, we hope you will support Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area. During 2019, we will start our first-ever membership program. Through membership, you will receive special programming and tourism options before those available to the general public.

**Want to keep up-to-date on Freedom's Frontier opportunities?
Go to freedomfrontier.org and sign up for our newsletter, or text FFNHA to 22828.**



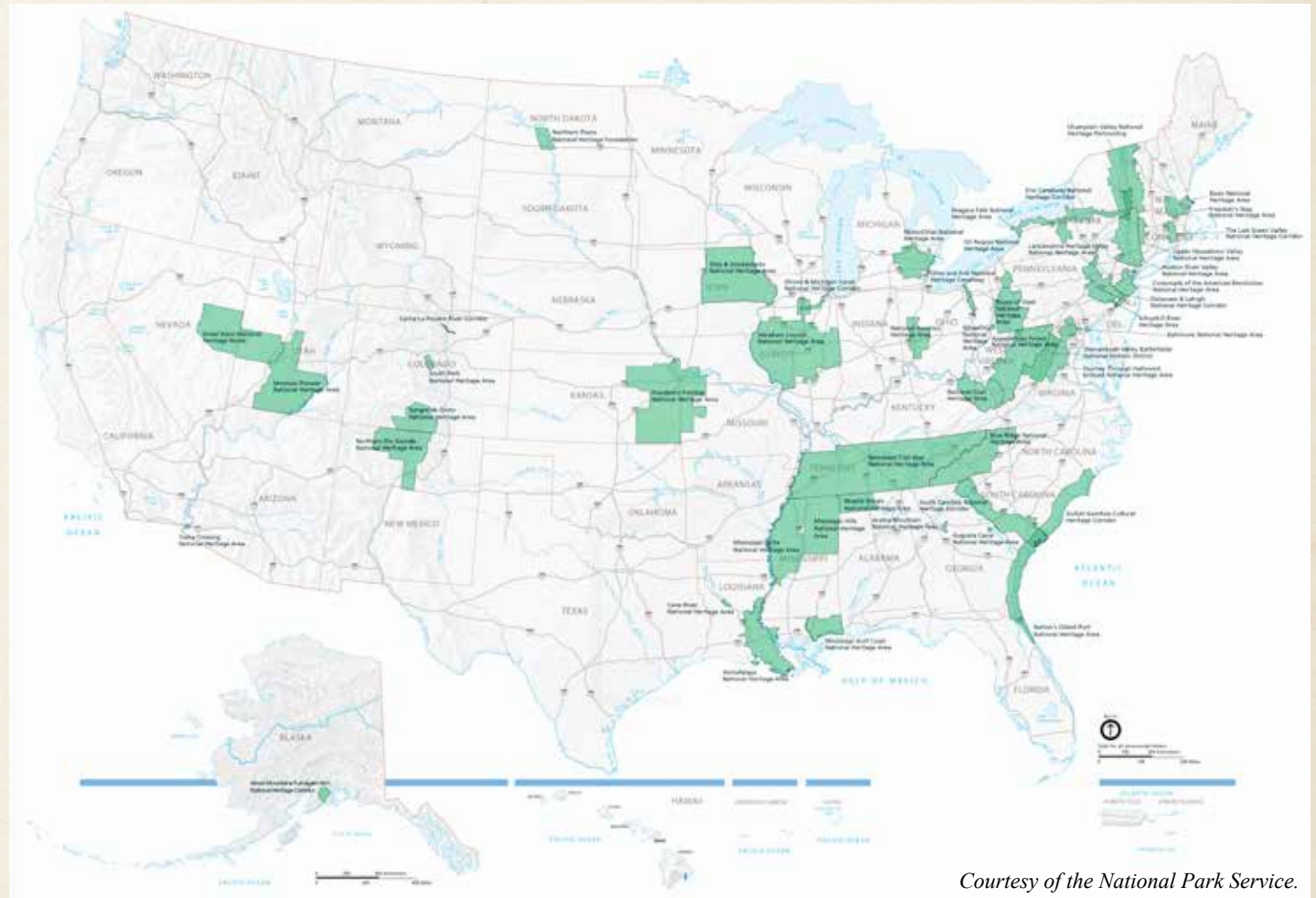
WHAT ARE NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS?

National Heritage Areas are designated by Congress for their unique, nationally significant qualities and resources. They are places where natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources have shaped a nationally distinctive landscape.

National Heritage Areas employ a partnership approach to heritage development involving collaborative planning around a theme that influenced the nation's culture and history. This planning strategy encourages residents, government agencies, nonprofit groups, and private partners to prioritize projects that recognize, preserve, and celebrate many of America's defining landscapes.

National Heritage Areas leverage an average of \$5.50 for every \$1.00 of federal investment to create jobs, generate revenue for local governments, and sustain local communities through revitalization and heritage tourism.

The National Park Service works closely with the 49 designated National Heritage Areas—representing every region of the United States.



Courtesy of the National Park Service.

Learn more about the work of National Heritage Areas across the nation by visiting nationalheritageareas.us.

**Want to support Freedom's Frontier?
Head to freedomfrontier.org and click the donate button.**

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Freedom's
Frontier
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA



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